

# RR



**REASON & REVELATION**

*A Monthly Journal of Christian Evidences*

JUNE 2022 • VOL. 42 • NO. 6

## Young People See Christianity as **ANTI-SCIENCE?**

### Is RASH Judgment Sinful?

Was Jesus  
Tempted in  
**ALL** Ways?

**FREE AP**  
*Materials*





**D**AVID Kinnaman is the president of the widely known research organization Barna. One of his primary areas of work deals with research regarding Christianity. In his book *You Lost Me. Why Young Christians Are Leaving the Church...and Rethinking Faith* he detailed several of the main reasons why 18-29 year-olds say they leave Christianity. In his list of six broad reasons young people leave their faith, the third reason he listed, based on the vast amount of research Barna has done on the topic, is that 18-29 year-olds believe Christianity is anti-science. He wrote:

Many young Christians have come to the conclusion that faith and science are incompatible. Yet they see the mostly helpful role science plays in the world they inhabit—in medicine, personal technology, travel, care of the natural world, and other areas. What's more, science seems accessible in a way that the church does not; science appears to welcome questions and skepticism, while matters of faith seem impenetrable.<sup>1</sup>

He further noted that the research showed that 29% of 18-29 year-olds said that churches “are out of step with the scientific world we live in, while one-quarter (25 percent) described Christianity as anti-science.”<sup>2</sup> He related the story of a Catholic man named Mike who became an atheist. Mike said: “It

was tenth grade. I started learning about evolution. It felt like my first window into the real world. To be honest, I think that learning about science was the straw that broke the camel's back. I knew from church that I couldn't believe in both science and God, so that was it. I didn't believe in God anymore.”<sup>3</sup> Kinnaman summarized the research by saying: “Issues of science are one of the significant points of disconnection between the next generation and Christianity.”<sup>4</sup>

At Apologetics Press, we have known for over four decades that this is the case. We have listened to countless, heartbroken parents tell us how their faithful Christian children abandoned their faith in God for the more “honest, intellectual” approach presented by modern atheistic science. In truth, this tragic problem is one of the primary reasons Apologetics Press exists. Furthermore, this issue should cause every church leader, elder, preacher, parent, grandparent, and church member to ask themselves what can be done. Let's look at several ways to approach the situation.

## I. RECOGNIZE THE NEED TO TEACH ON THE SUBJECT

Many people in the Lord's Church grew up without being challenged by questions about how science and the Bible interact. Because of this, they do not recog-

nize the fact that young people in the Church today are bombarded with information on a regular basis that demands that Christianity and science stand at opposite ends of the truth spectrum. The simple question that needs to be asked by every congregation of the Church is: **What are we doing** to help our young people understand the relationship between science, the Bible, and Christianity? What classes are scheduled to deal with the subject? What curriculum materials have we diligently assessed to be the most robust to deal with the issues? What special seminars or video series have we used (or plan to use) to help our youth through this very serious challenge to their faith? If the answers to these questions are, “nothing, very little, not much, and we don't know,” then there is a good chance that many of the young people of that congregation will have trouble with their faith because of this unanswered challenge.

## 2. TEACH THE TRUTH: SCIENCE AND THE BIBLE ARE COMPATIBLE

The primary sentiment expressed by young Christians who leave the faith based on “science” is that science and the Bible cannot both be true. This is a false statement designed by Satan to force our young people to make a choice that should never be made. You can quickly see how sinister this approach is by comparing it to other false dilemmas.

- Do you want to be a thinking intellectual or do you want to be a Christian?
- Do you want to care about people and their rights, or do you want to be anti-choice on the abortion question?
- Do you want to love and be kind to people, or do you want to teach that God only saves those who believe in Jesus?

Each of these ideas is presented as if only one can be true. When



addressing the question of science and the Bible, we discover that real science and a proper understanding of the Bible always agree with each other. Dr. Michael Houts, who holds a Ph.D. from MIT and works for NASA, has written an excellent article on this subject titled: “True Science is the Christian’s Friend.”<sup>5</sup> While most young people are taught by secular education institutions that science and the Bible are incompatible, they have not been equipped with the truth that shows this idea to be false. An honest look at real science will always increase faith in the Bible.

### 3. NOT ALL “SCIENCE” IS EQUAL

The quote David Kinnaman included from Mike, the atheist, gives us insight into the real conflict. He stated that he started learning about evolution in 10<sup>th</sup> grade and that is when he realized that “learning about **science** was the straw that broke the camel’s back.” He equated evolution with science. Unfortunately he was not given the truth about the aspects of evolution that are unscientific.<sup>6</sup> Often the information that young people are being told is real science, is nothing of the sort. It is our job as Christians to show our youth the difference and give them the tools to distinguish between truth and error. We should be determined to send our young people into the world knowing that they must “test all things” and “hold fast what is good” (1 Thessalonians 5:21). We cannot let them leave our congregations being so naïve as to think that everything an atheistic professor calls “science” is true science. There is a vast difference between legitimate science and false theories such as organic evolution, abiogenesis, and the inflationary Big Bang model.

### 4. DOES MODERN SCIENCE “WELCOME QUESTIONS AND SKEPTICISM”?

Many of the young people who left Christianity in Barna’s research did so because they believed that “science appears to welcome questions and skepticism, while matters of faith seem impenetrable.” It is imperative that we show our young people the truth about this false idea. The brand of atheistic, evolutionary science that is taught in most educational systems today in no way welcomes honest inquiry. In fact, the exact opposite is true. Young people need to be shown the truth that all scientific discoveries and research that even mention the idea of intelligent design are rejected immediately.<sup>7</sup> Valid scientific research that calls into question the billions-of-years timeframe of modern geology is dismissed. Scientific discoveries that disprove the Big Bang model are “cancelled” quickly.<sup>8</sup>

In 2007, the world’s leading atheist—Antony Flew—published a book in cooperation with Roy Varghese titled: *There Is a God: How The World’s Most Notorious Atheist Became a Believer*. Flew noted several times in the book that his

life’s mantra was to “follow the argument wherever it leads.” He further confessed: “I reached the conclusion about the nonexistence of God much too quickly, much too easily, and for what later seemed to me the wrong reasons.”<sup>9</sup> Flew proceeded in the book to document all the philosophical and modern scientific findings that drove him to the conclusion: “I have followed the argument where it has led me. And it has led me to accept the existence of a self-existent, immutable, immaterial, omnipotent, and omniscient Being.”<sup>10</sup> How do you think the atheistic, “scientific” community accepted Dr. Flew’s conclusion? In the preface of the book, Roy Varghese discussed the responses of those in the scientific community who once lauded Flew as a champion. He wrote: “Curiously, the response to the AP story from Flew’s fellow atheists verged on hysteria.... Inane insults and juvenile caricatures were common in the freethinking blogosphere.... The advocates of tolerance were not themselves very tolerant. And, apparently, religious zealots don’t have a monopoly on dogmatism, incivility, fanaticism, and

**Reason & Revelation** is published monthly by Apologetics Press, Inc. Periodicals postage paid at Montgomery, AL. **Postmaster:** Send address changes to **Reason & Revelation**, 230 Landmark Dr., Montgomery, AL 36117; **ISSN:**[1542-0922] **USPS#** 023415.

**Apologetics Press** is a non-profit, tax-exempt work dedicated to the defense of New Testament Christianity. Copyright © 2022. All rights reserved.

#### Editor:

Dave Miller, M.A., M.Div., M.A.R., Ph.D.\*  
(\*Communication, Southern Illinois University)

#### Associate Editor:

Jeff Miller, M.S., Ph.D.\*  
(\*Biomechanical Engineering, Auburn University)

#### Annual Subscription Rates:

\$14.00	Domestic
\$12.00	Domestic Bulk (5+ TO SAME ADDRESS)
\$14.00	Canada & Overseas (PLUS SHIPPING)

#### General inquiries, changes of address, or international callers:

Phone: (334) 272-8558  
Fax: (334) 270-2002

#### Orders:

Phone: (800) 234-8558  
Fax: (800) 234-2882

On-line Web store/catalog, subscription order/renewal form, current issues, archives, and other information (all orders processed on a secure server):

URL: [www.ApologeticsPress.org](http://www.ApologeticsPress.org)  
E-mail: [mail@ApologeticsPress.org](mailto:mail@ApologeticsPress.org)

**Discovery—Scripture & Science for Kids** is a sister publication for children. For more information, please contact our offices or visit the Discovery Web site at:  
URL: [www.DiscoveryMagazine.org](http://www.DiscoveryMagazine.org)

paranoia.”<sup>11</sup> Our young people need to know that the modern atheistic, “scientific” community is extremely welcoming and open to questions, **as long as** you arrive at exactly and only the conclusions that they have decided are “scientific.”<sup>12</sup>

## 5. THEY WILL HAVE TO MAKE A CHOICE

While our young people will never have to choose between real science and the Bible, they will have to make a choice. In today’s secular culture, the majority of educators, professors, politicians, and world leaders believe and teach falsely about the Bible and science. The vast majority of university professors are openly atheistic and many have made it their personal goal to destroy the Christian faith in their young students. Young people will be forced to decide if they love the truth more than error, and if they are willing to stand for the truth even when such a stand will cost them something. The modern geological community has adopted a billions-of-years time frame that does not rest on robust science. If a young person wants to be a geologist today, he or she will be pressured to adopt this same time frame, in spite of real, scientific evidence that militates against it. If young people do not toe the modern “scientific” party line, they may find that universities and jobs that offer geology degrees and opportunities will not even let them into their programs. Ultimately, our young people will have to choose between believing the truth, and sacrificing the truth because they want something more, such as recognition, acceptance, academic advancement, or to be viewed as part of the intellectual elite.

The New Testament gives us an excellent example of this dilemma. In the book of John, the author presents many evidences that prove that Jesus is the Son of God. The miracles He performed and the prophecies He fulfilled verified the truth of His claims. So convincing

were these evidences that the text says, “Nevertheless even among the rulers many believed in Him” (John 12:42). Their “belief,” however, was of little value to them. The text continues, “but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God” (John 12:42-43).

Our young people will be faced with a choice: not the choice between science and the Bible. The choice is between truth and error. Have we given them the foundation that adequately prepares them to stand for the truth when the rest of the world pressures them to believe a lie? As Jesus bluntly put it: “If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, **therefore it hates you**” (John 15:18-19). Let us not be so naïve as to think that Satan has infiltrated politics, sports, business, and most media outlets but somehow has left modern “science” alone.

## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> David Kinnaman (2011), *You Lost Me. Why Young Christians Are Leaving the Church...and Rethinking Faith* (Grand Rapids: Baker), pp. 92-93.
- <sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 136.
- <sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 138.
- <sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 132.
- <sup>5</sup> Mike Houts (2011), “True Science is the Christian’s Friend,” Apologetics Press, <https://apologeticspress.org/true-science-is-the-christians-friend-3572/>.
- <sup>6</sup> Mike Houts (2007), “Evolution is Religion, Not Science,” Apologetics Press, <https://apologeticspress.org/evolution-is-religion-not-science-part-i-2299/>.
- <sup>7</sup> Kyle Butt (2008), “The Catch-22 of Peer-Reviewed Journals,” Apologetics Press, <https://apologeticspress.org/the-catch-22-of-peer-reviewed-journals-2508/>.
- <sup>8</sup> “An Open Letter to the Scientific Community,” <https://www.plasma-universe.com/an-open-letter-to-the-scientific-community/>.
- <sup>9</sup> Antony Flew and Roy Varghese (2007), *There Is a God: How The World’s Most Notorious Atheist Changed His Mind* (New York: Harper Collins), pp. 12-13.
- <sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 155.
- <sup>11</sup> Ibid., p. viii.
- <sup>12</sup> Kyle Butt, “Freethought: Not so Free After All,” Apologetics Press, <https://apologeticspress.org/freethought-not-so-free-after-all-926/>.

## SPEAKING SCHEDULES

### Kyle Butt

June 12-15	Primm Springs, TN	(931) 619-6349
June 26-27	Columbia, TN	(931) 388-7334
June 30-July 1	Paintsville, KY	(606) 789-6219

### Eric Lyons

June 1	Luverne, AL	(334) 335-5089
June 5-10	Oakman, AL	(334) 272-8558
June 24-26	West Plains, MO	(417) 256-6317
June 29	Augusta, GA	(706) 855-0801

### Dave Miller

June 3,5	Dallas, TX	(972) 279-6186
June 7	Oakman, AL	(334) 272-8558
June 12	Montgomery, AL	(334) 264-2985
June 29	Birmingham, AL	(205) 440-3206

### Jeff Miller

May 29-June 3	Branson, MO	(417) 334-3866
June 4	Olive Branch, MS	(662) 895-5102
June 5-10	Parrish, AL	(334) 272-8558
June 18	Columbus, GA	(706) 561-3792
June 20-24	Corner, AL	(205) 647-9724



# Is Rash Judgment

# SINFUL?

Jeff Miller, Ph.D.



## Article In Brief...



**Modern culture tends blindly to believe what the majority of people or the “experts” say about a subject or about others who have been accused of wrongdoing. Forming our beliefs in such a way, however, can be fallacious, is irrational, and is unbiblical. If we are as concerned about truth as is God, we will gather sufficient evidence before drawing conclusions about what to believe. We will assume innocence until a person is proven guilty.**

ONE of the alarming trends that has been repeatedly highlighted over the past few years in American society has been the increasing number of non-Christians and Christians alike who are quick to believe unsubstantiated claims. If the supposed “experts” say something, if the media reports it, or if enough people believe something, regardless of the evidence for or against it, many will accept it as true. Be it belief in a flat Earth, belief in evolution or an old Earth, disbelief in Creation or the global Flood, “blind” faith in God or an unbiblical religious doctrine, or the hasty attacks of individuals or organizations by “Cancel Culture” assassins,<sup>1</sup> people are increasingly willing to throw caution to the wind and, like sheep, believe something

without question or, at the very least, little question. Such behavior is to be expected as our society moves farther and farther away from valuing **truth** and closer and closer to doing what simply “feels” right to a person (cf. Deuteronomy 12:8; Judges 17:6; Proverbs 12:15). However, that mindset is dangerous and unbiblical. How so?

## FALLACIOUS

**A**RGUING that something is true merely because a highly credentialed person—an “expert”—adheres to the position is a logical fallacy known as “appeal to authority.”<sup>2</sup> Historically, those considered to be the “authorities” of a subject have often been wrong (e.g., John 7:47-48). **Sound** reasoning would restrain a person from

drawing a conclusion until sufficient evidence has been provided to substantiate the conclusion.

Similarly, it may be true that **most** scientists have bought into the hoax of evolution, as was the case when scientists believed in geocentricity or that blood-letting was an appropriate prescription for curing ailments, but the number of believers in a certain idea does not prove the idea to be true. Does the fact that much of the world throughout history has believed in the legitimacy of sinful slavery prove abusive slavery to be moral? Arguing in such a way causes one to fall victim to yet another logical fallacy—the *ad populum* fallacy (i.e., appeal to the majority).<sup>3</sup> What the majority believes and what the experts believe is irrelevant in determining the truth. The Bible warns against making judgments based upon such flimsy, incorrect reasoning (cf. Exodus 23:2; 1 Corinthians 1:26; 1 Kings 22:5-23).

## IRRATIONAL

**T**HE importance of having sufficient **evidence** in arriving at truth cannot be overstated. In the field of philosophy, there is a general rule that is followed if a person wishes to be rational: the Law of Rationality. It says that one should only draw those conclusions that are warranted by the evidence.<sup>4</sup> In other words, one should only believe what can be proved and demonstrated to be true.

Many within Christendom seem unaware that Scripture endorses and commands adherence to the same obvious axiom. “Test all things; hold fast what is good” (1 Thessalonians 5:21). The Bible explicitly prohibits having a “blind” faith (i.e., coming to believe something without adequate evidence). Scripture incessantly makes the point that we should come to a knowledge of the truth **based on the evidence that has been provided to us**. As did

(cont. on p. 68)

# APOLOGETICS PRESS

95+ percent of our  
content is online for

# FREE



[pinterest.com/apcurriculum/\\_saved/](https://pinterest.com/apcurriculum/_saved/)



[apcurriculum.com](http://apcurriculum.com)

01

## AP Online Bible Curriculum: Exploring God's Word

AP online curriculum includes: 4 years of lessons, songs, visuals, activities, etc. This curriculum also has a corresponding Pinterest page with extra visuals and crafts for each series of lessons.

## ABR (Advanced Bible Reader)

This program has been designed simply for the purpose of offering an incentive to encourage Bible reading and the reading of Bible-related material. It is open to all, but is designed primarily for those in K-6th grade.

02



[advancedbiblereader.org](http://advancedbiblereader.org)



iTunes AP App



Google Play AP App

03

## AP App for iOS and Android devices

AP's mobile app allows you to have the power of our website right at your fingertips. The app is available for both Apple and Android devices.

## Over 20 Years of Journals Online

**R&R:** *Reason & Revelation*, a monthly journal on Christian evidences, is a central teaching medium of Apologetics Press. Online, AP has archived *R&R* issues that date back to 1999. A great research tool that allows you to search issues topically, by keyword, etc.

**Discovery:** A monthly magazine on Scripture and science for kids. Archived *Discovery* issues date back to 2000. Great for research, you can search issues topically, by keyword, or by year and month of the issue.

**V<sup>2</sup>:** *Valor & Virtue* is also viewable online. It is designed to provide teens with exciting evidences that will strengthen their faith and give them confidence to defend it. Normally printed semi-annually.

04



*R&R*



*Discovery*



*V<sup>2</sup>*

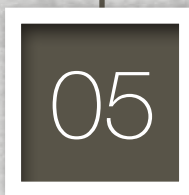


**FREE!**





Multimedia Site

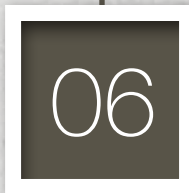


## AP Multimedia Section

AP's website houses over 400 audio and video files. Each file is searchable via topic, speaker, keyword, and title. Great resource for family Bible study, car rides, and sharing with friends and neighbors.

## Christian Evidences Home Study Courses

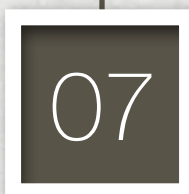
These courses are specifically designed for those who desire to study Christian Evidences. Three levels of courses are available: introductory, intermediate, and advanced. Each set includes 10 pdf lessons.



AP Home Study Courses



Other Translations

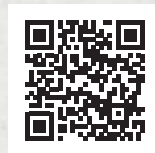


## AP Material in Other Languages

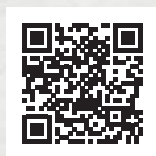
AP has hundreds of articles translated into six languages. Material can be read and understood by those whose native language is not English. The six languages are: Arabic, Chinese, Romanian, Russian, Spanish, and Swahili.

## PDF Books Online

There are 30 pdf books available to download and view for free. Download and take them wherever you go. Some included books: *The Quran Unveiled*, *Receiving the Gift of Salvation*, *What the Bible Says* series, etc.



PDF Books



ApologeticsPress.org

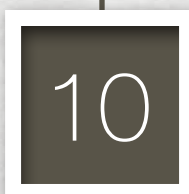


## Thousands of Articles on Christian Apologetics

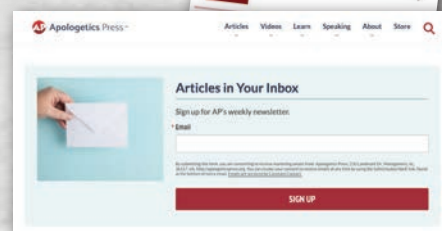
AP's website has thousands of articles listed under eight major headings. Each section has its own search engine which can search articles topically, by keyword, or by typing in a Bible verse.

## Weekly Email Newsletters

Every Monday AP sends an email notification of articles we have recently published or new products we are announcing. You can receive these weekly newsletters by clicking on the sign-up link located at the top of our website.



E-mail Newsletter



**FREE!**



the “fair-minded” Bereans of Acts 17, God wants us to search for **evidence** that substantiates a claim before blindly believing it (vs. 11). Since many false teachers (i.e., liars) are in the world, He tells us to “not believe every spirit, but test the spirits” before believing them (1 John 4:1). Unlike fideism (i.e., blind “faith”)—which pits itself against reason<sup>5</sup>—Paul believed in establishing truth **by reasoning** from the **evidence** (Acts 26:25). In fact, Jesus told His audience **not to believe Him** if He did not substantiate His claims with **evidence** (John 10:37). “Doubting Thomas” was not in error for failing to have a blind faith. Rather, he was in error for having been witness to more evidence of the truth than nearly anybody who had ever lived or ever would live, and yet he still disbelieved, requiring even more direct, observational evidence than he had already received (John 20:24-29).

The “blind faith” idea is unbiblical, and that truth applies to more than how one arrives at those religious views in which he believes. It applies to how we arrive at **any** conclusion in life. “Test [prove—ASV] **all** things [examine everything carefully—NASB]; hold fast what is good” (1 Thessalonians 5:21). It applies to anything which we believe. Rather than blindly believing what someone tells us about, for example, a religious idea or a person, the Bible enjoins diligent study to arrive at the truth, emphasizing that **most** people will not be willing to engage in the soul-saving, diligent pursuit of truth that leads to life (Matthew 7:13-14). To most, then, religious truth will be forever elusive.

### UNSCRIPTURAL

**M**AKING rash judgments about what we decide to believe can be fallacious, is irrational, and, most importantly,

is unbiblical. Besides the many passages cited above that enjoin the necessity of using sufficient evidence to arrive at conclusions, rash judgment about others violates the Bible’s teaching about assuming one’s innocence until he is proven to be guilty.

In Deuteronomy 19:15, God, through Moses, gave instruction concerning how Hebrew courts were to determine guilt when an alleged crime was committed. “One witness shall not rise against a man concerning **any iniquity** or **any sin** that he commits; by the mouth of two or three witnesses the matter shall be established.” Jesus re-affirmed the procedure in Matthew 18:16 with regard to how Christians are to sort out their differences. Paul re-affirmed the principle in 1 Timothy 5:19 with regard to how members are to bring accusations against wayward elders in the Lord’s Church.<sup>6</sup> The implied situation, of course, is one in which an accused person has either denied guilt or has not even had an opportunity to deny or confess guilt, and where guilt/innocence cannot be determined through “diligent” inquiry, searching “out the matter” (Deuteronomy 17:4; 13:14). The timeless principle which God implemented throughout Scripture, then, forces His followers not to convict (either in a court or in their minds) any such individuals of wrongdoing without enough legitimate evidence.

Consider: based on God’s law, what would happen in Old Testament court situations where only **one** witness came forward to accuse another person of wrongdoing? The verdict for the person was to be “not guilty” or, more specifically, “not **established** guilt.” Notice, then, that it is **God’s will** that a person is to be **presumed (or treated as) innocent** in such cases, **even if the person is actually guilty!** In terms of human action/response

to such situations, **God would rather a wrongdoer “get away with murder” than for humans, with our limited knowledge, to punish an innocent person.**<sup>7</sup> The shedding of **innocent** blood is an **abomination** to the Lord (Proverbs 6:17). As He said through Solomon, “to punish the righteous is not good” (Proverbs 17:26). “Keep yourself far from a false matter; **do not kill the innocent** and righteous. For I will not justify the wicked” (Exodus 23:7).

In Matthew 5:22-26, Jesus addresses how brethren should handle conflict, stating in verse 22 that “whoever is angry with his brother **without a cause** shall be in danger of the judgment.” In other words, a person should not allow himself to think ill of his brother if he does not have a legitimate—that is, **proven**—reason to do so, else His disfavor is “without cause.” The “accused” should be assumed to be innocent in our minds. We should “give him the benefit of the doubt” and think the best of him, in the same way we would want to be treated by others (Matthew 7:12). After all, love “hopes all things” (1 Corinthians 13:7), rather than assuming guilt. As society moves farther away from a Christian, biblical mindset, we should expect to see less biblical love to be manifested, including how gracious we are towards those who **may** have wronged us.

A Christian must be extra careful not to judge someone as guilty without sufficient evidence. It is notable that under the Law of Moses, in court settings, bearing false witness against another (whether intended or not) would result in the same punishment for the witness that the accused would have received due to his testimony—including execution (Deuteronomy 19:18-19). Question: is it important to God that His fol-



lowers not rashly and incorrectly draw conclusions about others?

Jesus, of course, was no stranger to being unfairly and rashly accused of sinful behavior. From condemnation of His eating with sinners and tax collectors (Matthew 9:10-11), to violating the Sabbath (Mark 2:23-24), to not encouraging His disciples to obey the elders' traditions in washing their hands before eating (Matthew 15:2), to various healings which He conducted on the Sabbath Day (e.g., Luke 13:12-14; Matthew 12:9-14<sup>8</sup>), to His claims of being equal with God (John 5:17-18), His jealous enemies were quick to jump to conclusions about His behavior and accuse Him of being sinful and even blasphemous. Instead of considering His sound refutation of their arguments and the preponderance of miraculous evidence that established the truth of His message (Mark 16:20; Hebrews 2:3-4<sup>9</sup>) and proved God's sanctioning of His behavior (John 5:36-37), His closed-minded, irrational, hard-hearted critics would ultimately kill Him due to their refusal to draw conclusions warranted by the evidence.

In John 5 we find one of the instances of Jesus healing an individual on the Sabbath day, resulting in an escalation of the Jewish leaders' hatred towards Him and desire to execute Him. In John 7 Jesus directly addressed their incorrect interpretation and application of Sabbath regulations (vss. 22-23) and proceeded to get to the root of their error: "Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with **righteous judgment**" (vs. 24). Jesus told His critics not to believe something merely because of **how it appears** to be on the surface. Instead, humbly acknowledge that some things are not as they seem at first. Then, dig deeper. "Don't judge a book by its cover" but, instead, get your facts straight before deciding guilt.

"But we wouldn't want the guilty person to go free, right?" True, but who says such a person will ultimately go unpunished? In the end, our just God will ensure that any guilty person will be punished. In some cases, however, it is not our place to implement justice (Romans 12:19; Leviticus 19:18; Deuteronomy 32:35). In God's sight, if we do not have enough evidence to prove guilt and implement discipline, it is not our place to do so. God's rule is that, if there is going to be error in implementing judgment, humans should err on the side of the **innocent**.

## CONCLUSION

**I**T is easy for us to be arrogant, thinking that our personal judgment or opinion about something is sufficient to establish it as "basically" true, even when we do not have all the necessary facts to warrant that belief. We would, no doubt, acknowledge that **others** need all the facts, but apparently not us. We may not consciously tell ourselves so, but we pridefully, tacitly believe that **our** "exceptional" intuition is beyond that of those around us. We are not, however, omniscient. As weak and fallible humans, we need **sufficient** facts to be sure we are right and, even then, may **still** be wrong.<sup>10</sup>

What should we do, then, when we hear a negative story in the news or on social media about a politician, a suspect in a crime, a police officer, or a belief that seems to be held by "most" people—not a jury conviction, but mere stories or claims? How should we respond when someone is accused of sexual misconduct by the media? What about when we see video footage or pictures that **seem** to prove guilt at first glance (but which can be doctored or spun to support a narrative)? Should we assume that individual to be **guilty—until proven innocent**, simply because the media,

an expert, or a friend said that the person is guilty? Should a person be considered innocent until **claimed** to be guilty or, rather, until **proven** to be guilty? Are **allegations** sufficient evidence to **prove** guilt? No, a person must dig deeper, gathering sufficient evidence to draw a conclusion. After all, "The first one to plead his cause **seems right**, until his neighbor comes and examines him" (Proverbs 18:17). We should never forget that Jesus would have **looked** guilty to many people. His actions were witnessed by more than an individual with a camera phone. Hundreds of people witnessed His alleged "Sabbath-breaking" actions and "blasphemous claims," but since they did not have all the relevant facts, they were not in a position to judge His guilt.

The remaining option that is available to us if we cannot gather sufficient evidence to determine the truth: stay out of the matter, postponing judgment about the person or subject. Is it possible that many of us have "learned to be idle, wandering about from house to house [e.g., through social media], and not only idle but also gossips and busybodies, saying things which [we] ought not" (1 Timothy 5:13)? As Peter said, "But let none of you suffer...as a busybody in other people's matters" (1 Peter 4:15). Are the duties assigned to us by the King of the Universe not enough to keep us busy virtually every moment of our day as His subjects? Have we noticed that the world around us is spiritually ablaze and in need of the cleansing blood of Christ that His subjects are charged with disseminating?

Imagine how different the world would be if we were willing only to draw those conclusions that are warranted by the evidence. What if scientists did not blindly accept naturalism, despite its popularity: the unobserved, unproven, and unprovable Big Bang, molecules-

to-man evolution, and a billions-of-years-old Universe? What if they actually considered **all** of the evidence rather than ignoring the powerful evidence for God and biblical Creation? What if politicians and government officials gathered sufficient evidence before making decisions that would affect entire countries and even future generations? What if people gathered sufficient evidence before rashly making assumptions about others simply because of their skin color? What if people gathered enough evidence about the situation before condemning a police officer who used deadly force against a citizen? What if Americans gathered enough evidence before blindly believing what the biased media and politicians claim about someone, proceeding to “cancel” them before they have even been fairly heard and tried? What if Christians gathered enough evidence before thinking ill of and attacking their brethren? What if people gathered everything the Bible says on a subject before coming to premature conclusions (e.g., “faith only”)?

If the principle of “innocent until proven guilty”<sup>11</sup> had been followed, Stephen would not have been stoned (Acts 7), Paul would not have persecuted Christians (Acts 8-9), and Jesus would not have been crucified. But consider: if we lived at the time of Christ, would we have been any different than the masses who followed the crowd, believing whatever they were being told, instead of testing all things and holding fast only to those things that are good/true (1 Thessalonians 5:21)? If it is our tendency to make premature judgments about others, why would we **rashly** assume that we would not be among those who **rashly** consented to Christ’s crucifixion? After all, Jesus **looked** guilty on the surface. A smart phone was not necessary because, once again, hundreds wit-

nessed Him with their own eyes “working” on the Sabbath. The majority believed He was guilty, and the religious experts/scholars whom the people trusted had judged Him as worthy of death. So, should Jesus not have been executed? Would I have been among those in the mob seeking to execute Jesus as well, or would I have been like Nicodemus who recognized the need for more evidence before conviction should be made (John 7:50-52)?

Bottom line: according to Scripture, a person should be presumed to be **innocent** until **proven** to be guilty. A Christian should humbly acknowledge his limited knowledge and tendency to make mistakes and, when sufficient evidence is not available to determine the truth on a subject, give others the benefit of the doubt. It’s what God expects.

## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> E.g., rash accusations against others of being racist, sexual abuse allegations, suggestions about police brutality, panic about COVID, the efficacy of masks, or adamancy about the necessity of others taking certain relatively new vaccines.
- <sup>2</sup> “Appeal to Authority” (2019), Logical Fallacies, <http://www.logicalfallacies.info/relevance/appeals/appeal-to-authority/>.
- <sup>3</sup> “Fallacies” (no date), *The Writing Center: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill*, <http://www.unc.edu/depts/wcweb/handouts/fallacies.html>.
- <sup>4</sup> Lionel Ruby (1960), *Logic: An Introduction* (Chicago, IL: J.B. Lippincott), pp. 130-131.
- <sup>5</sup> “Fideism” (2015), *Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary*, <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/fideism>.
- <sup>6</sup> Cf. 2 Corinthians 13:1; 1 Timothy 5:19; John 5:31ff.; 10:37; Concerning judging guilt for murder, specifically, see Numbers 35:30; Deuteronomy 17:6; Hebrews 10:28; Revelation 11:3; Matthew 26:60.
- <sup>7</sup> Even in the case of two or three witnesses, an innocent person could still be condemned. The witnesses, however, were to be carefully vetted (Deuteronomy 19:18) to make sure they were legiti-

mate and reliable, making convictions of innocents less likely (assuming the court was not already biased against the accused, as in the case of Jesus’ “trial”).

- <sup>8</sup> Dave Miller (2015), “Did Jesus Break the Sabbath?” *Reason & Revelation*, 35[5]:56-59, <https://apologeticspress.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/1505.pdf>.
- <sup>9</sup> Dave Miller (2003), “Modern-Day Miracles, Tongue-Speaking, and Holy Spirit Baptism: A Refutation—EXTENDED VERSION,” Apologetics Press, <https://apologeticspress.org/modern-day-miracles-tongue-speaking-and-holy-spirit-baptism-a-refutation-extended-version-1399/>.
- <sup>10</sup> E.g., in cases where we unknowingly have insufficient evidence or misinterpret the evidence.
- <sup>11</sup> Dave Miller (2018), “Presumption of Innocence,” Apologetics Press, <https://apologeticspress.org/presumption-of-innocence-5622/>.



**Q**: Jesus was never married and did not have to deal with the temptations that come with marriage. There are many other things He did not encounter while on Earth. How could Jesus be tempted in all ways like we are?

**A**: In Hebrews 4:15, the Bible discusses Jesus and says: “For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.” While this statement is very clear, sometimes we go through temptations in this life that seem to be



wholly different from anything Jesus experienced. Jesus never had to deal with the IRS. While Jesus was on Earth, He never dealt with a rebellious child who was addicted to drugs. Jesus was not bombarded by pornography as He walked the streets of Palestine like we are today when we check our email or innocently search the Internet for information. How were Jesus' temptations the same as ours?

As we look for answers to this question, we realize that each of us sometimes thinks we are dealing with something that nobody has ever experienced. The Bible, however, explains: "No temptation has overtaken you except such that is common to man" (1 Corinthians 10:13). The Bible further clarifies this idea when it elaborates more about the sin we are tempted to commit. In 1 John 2:15-16, we read: "Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world." This text tells us that there are three basic categories into which all sins fall. Every temptation that any person has ever experienced was a temptation to sin through the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, or the pride of life.

It is no accident that during the temptations of Jesus, Satan presented the Savior with three opportunities to sin. First, Satan tempted Jesus to turn stones into bread after Jesus had been fasting for 40 days. Satan attempted to get Jesus to give into the "lust of the flesh" and use His powers to alleviate His hunger (Matthew 4:3). Satan then tempted Jesus to prove that He was the Son of God by throwing Himself off the pinnacle of the Temple (Matthew 4:4-7). Satan appealed to the pride of life by daring Jesus to prove Who

He really was. Of course, Jesus countered with Scripture and did not fall into the sin of pride. Finally, Satan showed Jesus all the kingdoms of the world and "their glory" (Matthew 4:8). The Enemy promised that he would give these kingdoms to Jesus if Jesus would simply fall down and worship Satan. By presenting the kingdoms and their glory to Christ, Satan attempted to cause Jesus to fall into the lust of the eyes and covetously desire what He did not yet have. Once again, Jesus resisted the temptation. Thus, we see that Satan's onslaught on the Lord with his temptations designed to appeal to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life summed up the Enemy's entire repertoire of temptation.



We see this same categorization of sin in the tragic story of Adam and Eve's fall. When Satan approached Eve in an effort to tempt her to sin, she took a closer look at the forbidden fruit. Genesis 3:6 says, "So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate." Notice that "good for food" would appeal to the lust of the flesh, "pleasant to the eyes" would appeal to the lust of the eyes, and "desirable to make one wise" would appeal to the pride of life. Satan still bakes his poisonous dishes with the same three ingredients.

With this understanding of sin, we can now apply what we know to Jesus' temptations. The Bible does not say that Jesus experienced every

**situation** that we have experienced. He never drove in a car and had to deal with being cut off by a reckless driver. He was not tempted to overeat ice cream. And He had no babies of His own that cried incessantly and kept Him up till the wee hours of the morning. All of these situations, however, have three things in common. Each temptation presented to people in those situations involves the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, or the pride of life.

This relationship between temptations and situations can be illustrated in this way. One time a father and son were walking through a music store looking at the different instruments. For some reason, the son had been having trouble at school with some bullies and the father was telling him that Jesus understood all about his problems, since Jesus was tempted in all ways like we are. The son was incredulous. He did not see how Jesus had ever experienced what he was dealing with. Just then, the pair walked by a piano. The father directed the son's attention to the piano and asked him, "Do you think every song in the world has been played on that piano?" The boy quickly answered that such would be impossible. The father then walked over to the piano and methodically tapped every key, causing each to ring out its individual note. He then asked his son, "Has every key on this piano been played?" The son then understood the point. Even though every song in the world could never be played on a single piano (situations), every key on the piano could be played (temptations).

While Jesus might never have been in the **exact same situation** that you or I find ourselves in, we can know that the temptations He experienced that involved the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life were **the exact same temptations** we experience.



## NOTE FROM

## The Editor



## Free AP Materials

As a non-profit organization, Apologetics Press has always offered its products at prices far below retail. Additionally, we have always made available an assortment of free products to the public. Of necessity, a portion of our operating budget is dependent on the sale of our printed products. However, since our objective is to get the Word of God out to the world, we regularly find ways to get our materials into the hands of people without charging them. The vast majority of the materials we have produced are available **for free** on our website. Consider the following:

- We offer free PDF-Books in which the text of our printed books is converted to an electronic format. We presently have 30 such books available **for free** downloading at our website.
- We have on our site over 400 videos that may be viewed **for free**—involving a host of topics and subjects.
- We have an online Bible class curriculum. All the material for two-year-olds through fourth grade is completely **free**.
- We offer three **free** Christian evidences Home Study Courses—Introductory, Intermediate, Advanced—each having 10 lessons as well as an answer sheet.
- We provide an “Other Languages” section of our site that contains materials in eight languages: Spanish, Swahili, Haitian Creole, Arabic, Chinese, Indonesian, Romanian, and Russian. Look for the “English” icon at the top right of our main page. Our Spanish section contains over 700 articles.
- We offer **free** supplemental materials for our recently released *Flooded* book posted on a separate

site that includes a wealth of teaching aids including videos, quizzes, science experiments, and much more. Click on “Flooded Book Site” at the “Learn” tab on our main page.

- Our Advanced Bible Reader (ABR) site encourages Bible reading and the reading of Bible-related material, designed primarily for those in kindergarten through the sixth grade. Parents and teachers can monitor student progress and participate in the effort to promote Bible reading among the young.
- From the ABR site, one can click on the AP/JR. icon and encounter a host of **free** articles for kids, including articles from our *Discovery* magazine for young people. Numerous videos can also be accessed—including episodes of AP’s children’s television program *Digger Doug’s Underground*.
- And, of course, our site is literally loaded with thousands of **free** articles for adults, including past issues of our flagship journal *Reason & Revelation*.

Observe that the availability of these free materials constitutes an excellent way to engage in evangelism. One can easily point people to our site for easy access to these materials. One can do so by email (sending a link to one of the books), social media postings, phone calls, letters, and word of mouth. We hope you are taking advantage of these spiritually rich resources.

Dave Miller

See Center Spread  
for More Details